

Monthly Update – April 2013

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

OVERVIEW

USAID-TAPP is increasing incomes for smallholder farmers, improving nutrition, and expanding markets through agricultural innovation and commercialization. The program is part of Feed the Future, the US government's global hunger and food security initiative to break the cycle of hunger and poverty in the developing world. Feed the Future is focusing on the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT), a region the Tanzanian government has identified as the most conducive for agricultural growth. Working with our partners and the Government of Tanzania, USAID-TAPP is concentrating efforts on selected crops and regions to help transform the country's food security.

USAID-TAPP HOSTS GOVERNMENT EXTENSION WORKERS IN ZANZIBAR



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

A USAID-TAPP agronomist explains the importance of correct spacing in pineapple production to government extension workers in Zanzibar.

From April 9-11, USAID-TAPP hosted a group of government extension workers in Unguja, Zanzibar, for training on capacity building for smallholders. Following the horticulture cluster meeting with top Zanzibari government officials in January to ensure sustainable food security on the island, USAID-TAPP extended this collaboration through transfer of good agricultural practices to the 19 females and 10 male government participants. The trainings were conducted by USAID-TAPP Eastern Zone Manager Stephen Mruma and Senior Agronomist Omar Mohamed, who took the group to three project sites and showed them the importance of nursery management, soil sterilization for seedling production, and plant health and nutrition. The participants promised to share this newfound knowledge with each farmer group they currently work with. USAID-TAPP recently expanded its activities in Tanzania by fielding two agronomists in Pemba, Zanzibar, and Babati, Manyara. Both regions are of significant importance to Feed the Future, and will allow more farmers to break the cycle of hunger and poverty.

BOOMING MARKET RECEIVES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM USAID-TAPP

In April, USAID-TAPP conducted 212 trainings and signed up 94 new farmer groups from the different regions where the project works. The regions of Morogoro received a total of 66 trainings, while Mbeya and Iringa regions received a total of 30 trainings each. Iringa and Morogoro regions signed up 21 and 23 new farmer groups respectively. As a way of providing additional support to smallholder farmers, USAID-TAPP conducts technical assistance, trainings, and business development services on a regular basis. One part of USAID-TAPP's plan is to boost horticulture productivity through field days in different regions. Different farmer groups and other community stakeholders are invited to witness firsthand the benefits that project farmers are reaping as a result of implementing good agricultural practices in their crop production.

In the most recent field day event held this month in Mbuguni in Arusha region, USAID-TAPP invited over 100 farmer groups and stakeholders to client farmer Frank Lektorongo's sweet pepper farm to share the successes of how new technologies helped him and his other group members from the Mbuguni Farmers Group triple their sweet pepper production yield. Before joining USAID-TAPP in December 2011, the group used to cultivate tomatoes, maize, and sweet pepper under poor irrigation schemes, as Mbuguni is a region known to have regular droughts. Under the guidance of USAID-TAPP's agronomist Loto Simon, Lektorongo and his group members were taught correct spacing, the use of raised beds, weed removal, as well as trainings on nutrition and the importance of vitamins and minerals for the promotion of dietary diversity in order to combat malnutrition.

USAID-TAPP has also been able to assist the group members with building local market linkages. Since Mbuguni is a major supplier of all horticulture products in the Arusha market, USAID-TAPP works with different smallholders from this part of town so that they can boost their productivity and receive higher incomes through better competitive market prices of their products. USAID-TAPP has also rehabilitated the area with a reservoir, giving farmers from the community a reliable and safe water source for irrigation throughout the year, and curbing water shortage in the region. As a result of the group's efforts, the Mbuguni Farmers Group completed their harvest season with a profit of Tsh10,000,000 (US \$6,369) from a total sale of 12 tons of peppers.

USAID-TAPP PROVIDES SMALL HOLDERS WITH VITAL MARKET INFORMATION



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

A customer purchases avocados from one of the local markets in Kariakoo centre in downtown Dar es Salaam. The USAID-TAPP marketing specialist based in this bustling city regularly visits wholesalers to establish market links with buyers.

USAID-TAPP continues to expand buyer market networks and increase access to local market information through direct contact with buyers. With support from wholesalers, USAID-TAPP's marketing specialists in the Northern Zone and Southern Highlands conducted market visits to assess the situations in each region.

Hermence Lulah, USAID-TAPP marketing specialist in the Northern Zone, visited markets in Arusha, Tanga, Kilimanjaro, and Manyara in order to understand the market challenges farmers face in those regions. Two main issues rise high up above the rest. First, most farmers do not keep records of expenses incurred from production to marketing. With no records in place, farmers do not know how much profit has been made or lost for each individual crop. As a way of tackling this challenge, USAID-TAPP business development specialists work hand in hand with the marketing team in order to develop and provide trainings in agro-business

management. Another challenge observed is that oftentimes crops go through a chain of market players before reaching the final consumer. Case in point, each time Mang'ola farmers produced a bag of onions, the produce went from farmer to village broker to market broker to wholesaler to retailer before finally reaching the consumer. All participants in this chain were dependent on the profits made from the bag of onions, ultimately decreasing the final value of the product for the farmer group. USAID-TAPP works closely with key buyers in the main markets to understand their needs and find the most efficient and cost effective way of supplying them. The ultimate goal is to increase farmer sales prices get while still reaching the markets at competitive prices.

In the Southern Highlands, Angelus Mhelela collaborated with the Tanzania Home Economy Association (TAHEA) to provide technical trainings for farmers in rural Iringa and Mufindi districts, with a common goal of improving agricultural productivity and promoting market development for farmers in these regions. TAHEA serves as a strategic alliance that will advance the impact of sustainable development and foster private sector-led growth in emerging markets.

Tanzania Agriculture Productivity Program

"Increased food security through enhanced productivity"

USAID-TAPP is a five-year program implemented by Fintrac Inc. to increase smallholder farmer incomes through enhanced productivity, crop diversification, and improved market access. Visit www.tanzania-agric.org for more information on upcoming activities and to receive copies of monthly bulletins and success stories.

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